

## Message Text

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DRAFTED BY: D/LOS:ALAN BERLIND

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FOLLOWING REPEAT DUBLIN 01099 SENT ACTION USINFO INFO SECSTATE  
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QUOTE UNCLAS DUBLIN 01099

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SUBJECT: EDITORIAL IN IRISH INDEPENDENT MARCH 30, 1978

FOLLOWING EDITORIAL APPEARED IN IRISH INDEPENDENT  
MARCH 30, 1978 UNDER HEADING LAW OF THE SEA:

BELIEVE IT OR NOT - THE EXPERTS ON THE LAW OF THE  
SEA ARE TRYING ONCE AGAIN TO BRING SOME RULES  
INTO WHAT IS BASICALLY A NEW GAME, THE SEARCH FOR  
A GUARANTEED METHOD OF SHARING OUT THE RICHES OF  
THE SEA. THE EXPERTS ARE MEETING IN GENEVA,  
HAVING HAD A BREAK SINCE LAST JULY WHEN DISCUSSIONS  
IN NEW YORK COLLAPSED OVER THE QUESTION OF WHO  
SHOULD CONTROL MINING ON THE SEABED OUTSIDE  
TERRITORIAL WATERS.

THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE HAS BEEN GOING ON  
FOR A LONG TIME NOW, AND WHILE THE INITIAL CHAOS  
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HAS BEEN SORTED OUT SOMEWHAT THE EXPERTS ARE NO  
NEARER ACHIEVING A CONSENSUS ON ANY NEW LAWS THAN  
THEY EVER WERE. FOR IT IS APPARENT TO ALL OF  
THEM THAT POWERFUL STATES WITH SEA BOUNDARIES  
WILL MAKE THEIR OWN LAW WHEN IT COMES TO  
EXTRACTING RICHES FROM THE SEA, AND THE LITTLE  
ONES WILL GO TO THE WALL.

OUR OWN PROBLEMS ARE COMPLICATED: AS WELL AS  
HAVING OUR SEA-LIMITS WE ALSO HAVE COMMON MARKET  
LIMITS. WE DO NOT YET HAVE A CLEAR IDEA HOW FAR  
OUT INTO THE SEA WE MAY GO IN PURSUIT OF MINERAL  
OR OIL WEALTH WHICH WE MAY LEGITIMATELY CLAIM AS  
OUR OWN. OUR INTEREST IN THE TALKS ARE THEREFORE  
VITAL.

DRAFTING INTERNATIONAL LAW IS A DIFFICULT  
BUSINESS: MOST MARITIME LAW IS THE RESULT OF  
EVOLUTION OVER CENTURIES, WITH A GREAT SPEEDING  
UP IN THE PROCESS WHEN THE STEAM BOAT ARRIVED.  
BUT THE PRESENT CONFERENCE MUST TRY TO CATER NOT  
ONLY FOR ORDINARY MARITIME LAW BUT ALSO FOR ALL  
THE EVENTUALITIES THAT SCIENCE HAS MADE POSSIBLE  
IN THE PAST 20 TO 30 YEARS. WHO, AT THE START  
OF THIS CENTURY, WOULD HAVE EVER ENVISAGED GIANT  
OIL WELLS IN THE NORTH SEA, FOR EXAMPLE. THE  
GENEVA LAWYERS WILL BE WORKING HARD FOR A LONG  
TIME TO COME. KRENE

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## Message Attributes

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